

STAPLEHURST PARISH COUNCIL NOTES (for April 2013)

Annual Parish Meeting – This year's meeting will be held on Monday 29th April at 8.00 pm in the Village Centre North Hall. The meeting is hosted by the Parish Council for parish electors to discuss any matters affecting the parish. Refreshments will be provided. Local group secretaries have been requested to submit activity reports on their groups by 8th April at the latest for inclusion in the minutes for historical records so, depending on when you are reading this article, there is still time! Verbal reports will be taken at the meeting if time permits.

Village Clean-Up 2013 – By the time you read this we shall have completed our village clean-up on Saturday 9th March. The Parish Council would like to thank all volunteers and Maidstone Borough Council for their contribution to what he hope is now a much tidier parish!

Summer Village Update – Digital copies of all Updates are available at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/village_update.aspx. The Summer Village Update is due to be distributed the week commencing 20th May and will include a copy of the Parish Council's Annual Report for 2012-2013. Delivery is undertaken by volunteers whose assistance is much appreciated. If you would like to help deliver future Updates, please contact the Clerk with your details.

Staplehurst UpRockin 2013 – Another skateboarding event and family fun day is planned for Saturday 20th July at the Jubilee Field. This year's event will include a boot fair. Details will be published over the coming weeks but in the meantime please let any interested skateboarders know and advise them to start practising!

Bell Lane Toilets – They are opened daily and cleaned from 7.30 a.m. and locked for the night at 7.30 p.m. Staplehurst Parish Council arranged last year's redecoration of the facilities and put new cleaning arrangements in place – hopefully, users appreciate the difference! The Council wishes to do all it can to keep vandalism repair costs to a minimum and would be grateful if residents could report any damage, misuse or potential vandalism problems. For non-urgent reports, please call during office hours or leave a message on 01580 891761. If an issue requires immediate attention outside office hours, please telephone 07539 692588.

Council Surgeries at the Library – If residents wish to raise local issues Councillor Joan Buller and Councillor Neal Kemp from the Parish Council will be at the library on Saturday 13th April 2013 between 10:00 and 12.00 noon. Representatives of the local Policing Team will be available on Saturday 20th April between 11.00 am and 12.00 noon. The surgery by Borough Councillor Richard Lusty will be on Saturday 27th April between 10.00 am and 12.00 noon. All are welcome.

Website – As well as minutes and publicity material, reports submitted to the Parish Council are uploaded onto the website. Local businesses and village groups are welcome to manage their own website entries linked from the Trade Directory and Village Life pages of this website free of charge. Kindly contact the Parish Clerk for details. The Website Forum continues to be a useful source of local information and interesting comment.

Parish Information and E-groups – Copies of the minutes of Parish Council Meetings are available at Full Council Meetings and on the Parish Council Website at http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/minutes_of_the_last_meetings.aspx. A number of e-groups are available for anyone wishing to receive direct emails of useful information about local issues e.g., Weekly MBC Plans List, Parish Council Minutes & Agendas, Press Releases, etc. If residents have any queries regarding Parish Council or local authority issues, they are encouraged to contact the Parish Clerk for the facts.

MBC Cleansing and Collection Services – Call Maidstone Borough Contact Centre on 01622 602162 or go to www.maidstone.gov.uk for information about refuse services provided by Maidstone Borough Council. Use the phone number to report any undesirable activities such as fly-tipping, dumped cars, littering etc. and help to keep the environment clean and tidy. A “pull-out” (or rear of property) collection service is available to those who are unable to wheel or carry their refuse to the front boundary of their homes.

- **Waste Freighter** – The next visit of the waste freighter to Staplehurst will be on Saturday 18th May 2013; 0745-0830 at Poyntell Pond, 0840-0925 at Church Green and 0935-1015 at Northdown. Full details at http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/recycling_rubbish_and_waste/saturday_freighter_service.aspx. Please note that garden waste/vegetation is no longer accepted for disposal by the waste freighter.
- **Garden Waste** – The compostable MBC Garden Sacks are available while stocks last from Spuds 'n Buds, High Street, Henhurst Farm Shop, Pinnock Lane, TN12 0HD and Paxman Services (UK) Ltd at Unit 3 Larkstore Park, Lodge Road, TN12 0QY at £3.50 per roll of 5. Please note that the Parish Office no longer sells the sacks. Leave the white sacks beside your household waste bin on your collection day (or put vegetation in a blue-lidded wheelie bin hired from MBC specifically for garden waste). After 28th June 2013 sacks will not be collected, except for special cases, and will be replaced by two sizes of wheelie bin (240L and 140L available for an annual hire charge of £30 and £27 respectively). Neighbours may wish to consider sharing a bin. Further information is available at http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/recycling_rubbish_and_waste/household_waste_-_garden_waste.aspx or by telephoning 01622 602600.

- **Food waste** – Compostable bags for the kitchen caddies are available from the Henhurst Farm Shop, Pinnock Lane, TN12 0HD and Paxman Services (UK) Ltd at Unit 3 Larkstore Park, Lodge Road, TN12 0QY.
- **MBC Bulky Collection Service** – Phone MBC on 01622 602162 to arrange a collection. Details of fees are shown on http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/recycling_rubbish_and_waste/household_waste_-_special_col.aspx. Householders may also use the KCC Householder Waste Tip at Tovil. Details are at http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/recycling_and_rubbish/ways_to_recycle/waste_and_recycling_centres/maidstone_tovil.aspx

REPORT INCIDENTS TO THE POLICE WITH THE NATIONAL NUMBER

101 All non-emergency crime-incident reports should be telephoned to 101. This non-emergency 24/7 national police telephone number will enable you access to the local policing team – wherever you happen to be in the UK. Use 101 to report any non-life threatening incident that you witness for automatic referral to the correct local policing team. Full details are available at <http://www.police.uk/101>. If you prefer, calls to Crimestoppers will remain anonymous: 0800 555 111, but these may not be referred back directly to this parish or logged into the police systems. Life-threatening incidents, crimes in progress or serious injury road traffic accident that require urgent police attendance should be notified by dialling 999 in the usual way.

Community Warden Mira Martin: mob: 07811 271254 e-mail: mira.martin@kent.gov.uk and PCSO Pete Gardner Tel: 101 email: peter.gardner@kent.pnn.police.uk with Special Constable Ken Baker remain the local visible policing presence in our Parish, but have emergency back-up from the force as necessary.

Hire of North & South Hall, Staplehurst Village Centre - To enquire about the availability of either hall, please contact the booking clerk on 07864 547453. The Parish Office does not deal with Village Centre bookings, although we do get many enquiries!

Dog Mess & Disposal – Red dog waste bins are provided by Maidstone Borough Council at strategic points around the parish. Thankfully only a small minority allow their dogs to defecate in public areas without clearing up the mess. If you witness such anti-social behaviour or wish to report persistent incidents of mess, telephone MBC Environmental Services on 01622 602162 to give details, including information in confidence about perpetrators if known. Visits to problem areas can be timed to be most effective and a fine imposed when the offender is caught. To report a stray dog, telephone MBC's Dog Warden on 01622 602117.

Maidstone Borough Highway-related services - MBC remains responsible for some highway services such as street sweeping, street nameplates, street naming and numbering, park and ride facilities. Telephone MBC Contact Centre

on 01622 602162 to report most highway-related issues requiring attention. For all other Highways and Public Transport issues contact Kent Highways.

Kent Highways - Call 08458 247 800 any time 24 hours a day 7 days a week to report any local highways issues, such as defects to the roads, footways, signs, drainage and street furniture, etc. You can also report defects online at <http://www.kent.gov.uk/KCC.KHSFaultsGIS.Web.Sites.Public/> . You do not need to contact the Parish Office to report such defects. Responsibility for motorways and trunk roads lies with the Highways Agency on 08457 504030.

Kent Public Rights of Way – To report any issues with public rights of way call 0845 345 0210 (lines open 8am - 8pm Monday - Friday), email westprow@kent.gov.uk, visit the KCC website http://www.kent.gov.uk/environment_and_planning/countryside_access.aspx or write to Public Rights of Way and Access Service, 8 Abbeywood Road, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4YT.

Bogus Caller Advice: If any caller does not have an appointment, then ask them to wait while you check their identity. Do not be afraid to close the door and make them wait. Checking identity can sometimes be difficult and confusing to do. If so, ask them to come back at another time when you can have someone with you. If the caller is genuine they will understand and not mind returning. The local policing team in partnership with Trading Standards has introduced a **Cold Calling Control Zone** for Staplehurst. Information has been circulated and signs put up to educate residents and cold-callers about this initiative.

Neighbourhood Watch operates a scheme called Nominated Neighbour, which asks the caller to go to a neighbour who will return with them, so you do not have to deal with this alone. If you wish to learn any more about this, contact the Neighbourhood Watch Office on 01622 604395. Never give any personal details to a stranger. Remember it is your home and you should not be afraid to ask them to leave. If you are at all concerned about a caller, telephone 101.

KCC Handyvan Services: The fitting of various security devices for householders is available through KCC in partnership with Age UK. Please telephone 08450261055 or Email: handyvan@ageuk.co.uk for details. Website: http://kent.gov.uk/community_and_living/community_safety/home_safety.aspx

Brighter Futures – Voluntary Action Maidstone's Brighter Futures project is designed specifically for the over 65s and focuses on health and wellbeing. It organises activities such as exercise classes, day trips, shopping trips and a befriending service. To find out more about the project's activities in Staplehurst telephone Amanda Duddle on 01622 762403 or 07723 397214 or e-mail amanda.duddle@vam-online.org.uk.

Age UK Maidstone: Maidstone Age UK provides information and advice to support older people, their relatives and carers. Visits can be arranged and telephone advice given – call Angela on 01622 753618. It also provides an advocacy service to become the voice of those unable to handle matters on their own – call Aileen on 01622 753618.

Future Library Services – Kent County Council continues its consultation with residents across the county about the shape of future library services in Kent. It wants to work with local communities to find new and efficient ways to run local services. For further information about the Future Library Services initiative visit the KCC website www.kent.gov.uk/libraries. To have your say write to: The FLS Team, Kent Libraries, Registration and Archives, James Whatman Way, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1LQ; telephone 01622 696504; or e-mail fls@kent.gov.uk. From **April 2013** Staplehurst Library will operate revised opening hours on Tuesdays (closing at 6.00pm) and Saturdays (opening longer hours from 9.00am to 3.00 pm).

Planning Committee and Full Council Meetings in South Hall, Staplehurst Village Centre from 7 p.m.

Tuesday 2nd April 2013

Monday 15th April 2013

Monday 29th April 2013 (Planning Committee followed by Annual Parish Meeting – North Hall)

Please note that the start time of Full Council Meetings is variable and depends on the length of the Planning Committee meeting agenda. Please check with the Parish Office prior to the meeting for an estimated start time; alternatively, consult the agendas displayed on the village centre noticeboard or the village website: <http://www.staplehurstvillage.org.uk/agendas.aspx>.

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The Parish Office is open to the public 0900-1300 hrs.

Mondays to Fridays (except Thursdays by appointment).